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Sermon at the Dedication of a Church.

Ps. 50, 14.

BELoved FRIENDS:—

As we walk along the streets of a large city, we see everywhere, erected for purposes of this present life, beautiful structures, for legislation, for literature, for the arts and sciences, and even for purposes of business. But important as the interests are which these structures represent, they are not the most important, for they but serve the purposes of this present life. Man's interests far transcend this earth. His wants are too deep, his powers and affections far too large for things temporal to satisfy him. Therefore the most magnificent structures reared by men for earthly uses do not express the end and purpose of man, his eternal interests, as does the humble spire pointing heavenward from some small church on some obscure street.

Such being the case, it is but meet and right that the dedication of a new house of worship should be made the occasion of joy and gratitude; that prayers of thanksgiving and hymns of praise should ascend up on high when such a house of God is being set apart for its holy purpose.

You, beloved friends, have built a beautiful church to serve you as your future place of public worship. With cheerful hearts you have given of your temporal means to build this edifice; God has blessed your undertaking; the building stands completed, and therefore you rejoice, and we rejoice with you. As you sit here in this commodious church with its appropriate furnishings, and then think back upon the old wooden structure with its plain furniture that served you as a house of worship for fifty years, I am sure that your hearts must swell with joy and your lips must overflow with words of sincere thanksgiving.

But happy as you are in the possession of this new church, I also know that your gladness and gratitude find their ultimate cause in the blessed fact that in this new church, even as in the old, you shall hear the same old Gospel that is able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus; that this new church will be for you a Bethel, a house of God, and the gate to heaven.

Yet, dear friends, let this day of dedication not be a day of rejoicing only,—let it also be a day of holy resolutions. In erecting this house of worship and dedicating it to the service of God, you have taken upon yourselves the performance of a twofold duty. In building this church, you have, as it were, made a double vow to God. And it is my purpose, with the gracious help of the Holy Spirit, now to impress the sacredness of this vow upon your hearts. With the holy psalmist I say to you,

PAY YOUR VOWS TO THE MOST HIGH!

- I. *See to it that in this church nothing but God's Word be proclaimed.*
- II. *See to it that you hear this Word and keep it.*

I.

Your first desire should be to have God's Word proclaimed in this new house of worship. In setting it apart as an Evangelical Lutheran church, you have made the promise that nothing but God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure shall be preached here; that these walls shall reecho naught else but the doctrine of Christ and His apostles. Christ is the sun; this church, as the moon, is to reflect upon the world the light of the Sun of Righteousness. This pulpit should serve no other purpose than to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, the power of God unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. As Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corinthians but Christ and Him crucified, so you should be determined that your pulpit shall send forth no other message than this.

It is your duty to see to it that your minister does not here give expression to his own thoughts, that he does not here utter words of this world's wisdom, but only delivers the message which God has given him. An ambassador bears the message of his sovereign, a message to which he must not add, and from which he must not subtract. His words are to be the words of his nation. Your pastor is the ambassador of Christ. As such it is his duty to utter the words of his King to his people. His sole aim should be to take Christ's words and utter them in the ears of the people.

This your church is not to be a lecture room, where learned disquisitions on scientific subjects may be heard; it is not to be a

legislative hall, where national politics are to be discussed; it is not to be a city-council chamber, where questions of city government and improvement are to be deliberated upon: nay, it is to be a house of God, where God through His mouthpiece will show you the way to heaven—answer for you the question, “What must I do to be saved?”

The grand design of the Church of God on earth is to call men to salvation and to furnish them the means of obtaining eternal life. Such should also be the purpose of every individual congregation. Your purpose in building this church should be to afford a place where by the preaching of the Word men may be made Christians and heirs of life eternal. Here men are to be led to a home in heaven. With this aim in view, your helpless infants should be brought to the Savior in the sacrament of Holy Baptism; in later years they should be gathered into your school and catechetical classes for instruction in religion, and be admitted, when properly prepared, into full communion by the solemn rite of Confirmation. It is your sacred duty to see to it that not only the Word be preached in its purity, but that, likewise, the blessed Sacraments be administered according to the institution of Christ. In short, the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth is to be the subject of all teaching and preaching in this church. It is your bounden duty to have the Truth of God laid before men’s minds in all its completeness, soundness, and fullness, free from all wilt, and un mutilated by the proud and presumptuous hand of philosophy falsely so called.

Knowing, as you do, that the Gospel of Christ is the only sure guide to heaven, the only balm for the wounds of sin, the only guiding star in the night of sin and trouble, the only reliable companion in the wilderness of this world, the only bulwark against the onslaughts of Satan, the only strength for the weak, the only comfort for the sorrowful,—knowing this, dear friends, I beseech you, as you love the Savior that died for you, as you value your own souls and those of your fellow-men, see to it that within these walls nothing be preached but the saving Word of the Lord!

II.

But permit me now to remind you also of the second vow you have made to God in building this church. Let me pray you to *hear and keep* the Word that will here be proclaimed. When Christ says to us, “Preach the Gospel to every creature,” He not only demands that the Gospel be proclaimed, but that it be heard and believed. The preaching of the Gospel, if it be not heard and believed, can serve to no purpose. Of what benefit can the sweetest Gospel sermon be to you, if you be not here to listen to it? What good can

next Sunday's sermon do you, if your seat be vacant? Medicine, if it be not taken, cannot cure the patient; bread, when not eaten, cannot still hunger; water cannot assuage thirst, if not drunk. So, too, my friends, the blessed Gospel cannot be the power of God unto your salvation, if you do not hear and believe it. Christ says: "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."

In His Gospel Christ offers us the treasures of His grace, the fruits of His redemption, forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation; in Holy Baptism He would wash him that is baptized by the washing of the water by the Word, enkindle faith and make him the heir of life eternal. In the Lord's Supper Christ gives the communicant His body and His blood under the bread and wine with the assurance: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins;" but can all this avail, if you do not come and hear the Gospel and believe it, if you do not bring your infants to the blessed font, if you do not partake of the Holy Supper? The Gospel is the message of the heavenly Father to His disobedient children, "Come! All is forgiven and forgotten;" it is the gracious pardon of the King of kings offered to His rebellious subjects. But to help the subjects and be of any value to the children this pardon, this invitation, must be heard and believed.

Now I know full well that we cannot come to Christ, or believe His blessed Gospel, by our own power or strength; the ability to do so must be given us. But see, this power to believe the Word is given us by the Holy Ghost through the very Gospel we are to hear and believe. The Gospel gives us strength to believe its precious promises of forgiveness in Christ. The faith which we cannot have of ourselves God will give and work in us through His Holy Spirit by His Word and Sacraments, the means of grace. If, therefore, you desire to have pardon for your guilt, rest for your weary soul, peace of conscience, blessing and life eternal,—here it is offered to you in the Gospel; only hear and believe it.

But, dear hearers, your vow to hear and keep God's Word goes yet further in its scope. It implies that you will use your utmost endeavors to cause others to hear and keep it. And how could it be otherwise? Having for your own selves learned the truth of Christ's words: "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it," how can you restrain your heart from desiring that others, also, be partakers of your bliss? You here find the bread of life to still your hunger—must you not feel compelled to bring others to this house of bread? You here find the water of life to quench your thirst—must not your heart drive you to bring others to this blessed fountain? Here you find balm for your wounded breast—can you see

others wounded unto death by the arrows of sin and not tell them of the healing ointment? You here taste of the sweetness of God's love in Christ—can you be guilty of leaving others in ignorance of that which is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb?

O may, then, the twofold vow which you have made this day before the throne of God be ever present with you, and may you ever pray Him to whose honor you have erected this house to give you strength to keep it.

Here, in Thy name, eternal God,
We build this earthly house to Thee;
O choose it for Thy fixed abode,
And keep it from all error free.

Here when Thy messengers proclaim
The blessed Gospel of Thy Son,
Still by the power of His great name
Be mighty signs and wonders done.

Thy glory never hence depart;
Yet choose not, Lord, this house alone:
Thy kingdom come to every heart,
In every bosom fix Thy throne.

Amen.

F. J. L.

Confessional Sermon.

PROV. 4, 23.

Let us pray!—O Thou holy and most righteous God, who abhorrest sinners and threatenest to punish all who transgress Thy commandments, we come before Thee in this hour of confession, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our unworthiness. We know that we have been conceived and born in iniquity, that we daily sin much in thoughts, words, and deeds, that, by reason of our manifold shortcomings, we deserve nothing but Thy wrath and displeasure, temporal and eternal punishment. But, O gracious Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner, look upon us, we beseech Thee, in mercy and forgive us all our transgressions. Make us deeply sensible of the great evil of them, work in us a hearty contrition, that we may, as humble penitents, receive forgiveness at Thy hand, as worthy communicants approach the sacred Table of our Redeemer's body and blood, and by the direction and assistance of Thy Holy Spirit lead a noble Christian life. We ask this for Jesus' sake. Amen.

If ever there was an individual who deeply experienced the deceitfulness of the human heart and felt the importance of keeping a continual and jealous watch over it, it was the writer of the words of our text. We all know how Solomon in his early life had

chosen God as his friend and chief good, and how God had granted him for his judicious choice favor and riches. But most sorrowfully do we hear that in advancing years the heart, once guarded with so watchful care, was opened to the inroads of vice and temptation, and fell a victim to idolatry and the Destroyer. If anyone, therefore, was qualified from sad and bitter experience to impress upon his fellow-men the importance of the admonition of our text, it was the wise King of Israel. And deep, indeed, is the meaning it expresses. To keep the heart right with God embraces the whole duty and welfare of man. He who has mastered this art understands the secret of holy living and Christian usefulness. Permit me, therefore, for our every benefit to point out to you *the imperative duty of keeping the heart.*

When it says in this exhortation: "Keep thy heart with all diligence," we take it for granted that it refers to the heart of a believer, a heart that has, like yours, been renewed and changed by divine grace, a heart that has been set aright, and the duty is to keep it aright. Let this not surprise you. No soul, no Christian, no matter what might be the degree of his piety and purity, is free from unholy influence in this world. There are corruptions within, and there are temptations from without. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies"—is the description your Master has given us of the human heart, and it is as general as it is true. Even Adam in Paradise needed watchfulness, and it was because he failed to watch that he fell. David and Peter, Abraham and Elijah, if ever they slipped in the pursuit of a life of holiness,—and they did,—it was because they left unguarded the avenues of their hearts, failed to watch, or, as our text says, to keep their hearts with all diligence. This word "keep," in the original text, is generally used for the keeping of a vineyard or a city. We are to keep our hearts like a vineyard. From Is. 4, 2 we learn that the vineyard was first cleared of the stones, and surrounded by a wall or fence. The choicest vines were then planted and a tower built as a station for the watchman whose constant care was to preserve the vineyard from all kinds of enemies—an arrangement easily understood when we consider that in the Oriental countries foxes, jackals, and other wild animals infest the cultivated fields. As it is with such an Oriental vineyard, so it is with our hearts. The rubbish of sin is first cast out, a wall of spiritual and church habits is placed around, and the choicest plants of Christian grace cultivated, but then it must not be abandoned, yea, then begins the most important duty of preserving what has been planted against enemies more cruel and

cunning than wild beasts of the field. Or, to apply the figure of keeping a city or fortress: It means that the soldiers must be on their guard against the treacherous and traitors within the garrison or city, lest they parley with the enemies, and on their guard against the foe without. And that is the exact picture of the heart of a believer. Without are Satan, the world, and all that is in the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," and within are the remaining elements and shoots of an evil, sinful human nature, always ready to betray the soul into the hands of its enemies. Against these it is our duty to "keep our hearts." *How can we do so?*

In order to keep the heart, it is, first of all, essential that you know what your heart is like. The wisest saying that has come to us from ancient learned Greece, and which was inscribed in letters of gold over their temple at Delphi, read: "Learn to know thyself." Remarkable as it may sound, there are few people in this world who know themselves, but it is a duty which every Christian must undergo would he be a Christian, for there can be no spiritual life unless there be previous heart- and self-examination. It is true, this is something from which we naturally shrink. Man is by nature a Pharisee. He thinks far more highly of himself than he ought; he dislikes to be convicted of any guilt, and, like Adam, immediately throws the blame upon someone else; he is always ready to put his own shortcomings in the list of "little sins" and to shut his eyes against disagreeable features. As we are always disposed to neglect or to perform in haste unpleasant tasks, so it is with this searching of heart. But this is neither right nor prudent. A Christian should know how his account stands with his God. What would you think of a merchant or tradesman who never balances his accounts, or does it in so perfunctory a manner as never to find out his positive standing? Nay, in order to keep the heart we must learn to balance our account, that means, as our Catechism directs us when coming to Confession: "Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments." Hold up before you the mirror, the rule, and the curb of God's righteous Law, and let its holy light, reflected from the countenance of a holy and sin-hating God, shine through the secret chambers and dark recesses of that soul of yours, it will reveal to you passions and guilt. You may shrink from yourself to think what evil thoughts and motives lurk in the human breast, but it will reveal yourself to yourself as a poor, miserable sinner who has nothing to plead in the sight of God, nothing to exalt himself above his fellow-man, and every reason to keep a diligent watch over himself, lest those evil tendencies gain the upper hand and bring him into present and eternal ruin and perdition. — This,

then, is the first direction for keeping the heart—learn to know thyself from God's Law.

The second is, briefly stated: Learn to know your God and Savior. You have learned to confess Him in the Second Article as the true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, etc., who has redeemed you, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. Recognizing and appreciating what your Savior has done for you, it ought to induce you to exercise a jealous watch over yourself, lest you offend and crucify Him afresh. True, the heart does not become perfectly holy, and evil thoughts cannot be entirely suppressed, but as Dr. Luther puts it: "I cannot keep the birds from flying over my head, but I can keep them from building their nests there," so a Christian, one who knows and loves his God, cannot keep evil thoughts and inclinations from rising up in his heart, but he can keep from entertaining them, from giving them lodging and a home, he can, he must resist, restrain, and resent them. And so also with temptations from without. A Christian cannot keep from hearing language which is filthy and abusive, from observing scenes which are obscene and demoralizing, from coming in contact with company which is uncouth and unsavory, but while you cannot escape from such in this world of sin and wickedness, one thing you can do, and this our text admonishes us to do, would you be Christian men and women, and that is to keep aloof from such, not to indulge in such profane and filthy language, not to take part in such worldly and unchristian practices, not to misimprove your Sundays and the worship of God, etc. This you can do, and this, with God's help, you must do, would you approach the Lord's table to-day as worthy communicants, for a worthy communicant is one who, knowing and repenting his sins, sincerely and earnestly purposes to lead a godly life.

May the kind Lord, who says, "Without me ye can do nothing," grant you strength to "keep your hearts with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Amen. L. B.

Funeral Sermon on John 16, 22.

IN CHRIST JESUS, OUR RESURRECTED SAVIOR, DEARLY BELOVED
MOURNERS AND FRIENDS:—

By one ruthless blow death severs the most tender ties of kindred. Husband and wife, children and parents, brothers and sisters, whom God united and whom years of affection and mutual

care drew closer and closer together, are torn apart, and left widowed, orphaned, and forsaken by death. Ah, that is a part of the bitterness of death, the forcible separation of loved ones. Indeed, it is this painful loss of a loved associate which crushes some more than anything else. Even the unbeliever is often overwhelmed with the unutterable sadness and piercing pang of parting. He may have smothered the voice of his soul and conscience till the thought of eternity, judgment, hell, and God's wrath over sin has little or no terror for him. But if he be human, if a spark of human feeling still burns within his breast, then the dying of his dear ones will tear his bosom and wound his heart, fill his soul with anguish and his eyes with tears. Without comfort or consolation such a one is racked with grief and given up to mourning without hope.

But how is it with the Christian? He also feels this pain, but he has a sweet comfort against this very sorrow of parting. What is it? It is the blessed hope of a glorious and joyous reunion with the loved dead in life eternal. The Christian who sees his dear ones taken by death weeps to see them depart, but with firm hope he lifts his eye to that gathering above where we will meet again—never to part. Such is the hope and consolation that fills us also here at the coffin of your dear husband and father, and therefore I will now speak to you of:

THE CHRISTIANS' REUNION IN HEAVEN.

I. *Its certainty;* II. *Its happiness;* III. *Its eternity.*

I.

Our text presents to us Jesus speaking to His disciples shortly before His death. He had told them that He must leave them, and because He spoke to them of His departure, sorrow, great and bitter sorrow, had filled their hearts. Jesus therefore wishes to comfort them, and He does this by telling them that He will see them again, that the parting is not to be forever, that there is to be a reunion. "I will see you again," says He. And He fulfilled His promise. Jesus did not remain in death, but rose on the third day and appeared to His disciples. They saw and spoke and walked with their dear Lord again—*there was a happy reunion*. Jesus is mightier than death or the grave, and not only did He actually arise from the dead, but He has promised to raise up all His Christians, and to give them a life with Him in glory. "Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light." This mighty Conqueror of death has said to His own people: "I live, and ye shall live also." And: "Where I am, there shall my servant be." And again: "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth

in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." These are promises of our Lord which assure us that Christians are not to remain in the grave, but to come forth and live with Christ and with the saints made perfect in heaven. Christ's promises have never failed of fulfillment. We may safely trust every word which He has spoken. He is the Truth itself, and His utterances are more reliable and firmer than all else.

Therefore we know and believe with unshaken confidence: our beloved dead who have departed in the Lord will rise again, and we shall rise with them—*there will be a reunion*. Just as Jacob was privileged to see and embrace his long-lost son Joseph, whom he believed dead, just as the widow of Nain received her son back to life and to her home, just as Mary and Martha and Jairus were reunited with their beloved dead, so will we hail the hour in which God will reunite us with our beloved who sleep in the Lord. What your dear husband and father said on his deathbed, "I will see you again in glory," was not an idle dream but the expression of faith in Christ's power and in the resurrection of the body. And though the parting is painful to you, is it not sweetened by the assurance of hope: "*We will see him again*"?

II.

But not every reunion beyond the grave is going to be a happy reunion. Dives in hell dreaded the moment when his wicked brothers would meet him in that place of torment. Certainly we can imagine nothing more terrible and distressing than the reunion of those who will be raised up to shame, contempt, and suffering in the fire that will not be quenched. But Jesus speaks of an entirely different reunion. He does not only say, "I will see you again," but He adds the promise, "Your heart shall rejoice." And how great was the joy of the disciples when they saw their Savior again! And still greater will be the joy of the Christian when in heaven he will be joined by his Lord and his brethren. It will in very truth be a deep joy of the *heart*. It will not only be a little, pale, and imperfect joy, but a deep, true, and real joy of the heart. "Your heart, your *heart*," says the Lord, "shall rejoice."

Think of it! In heaven we will see our dear Lord Jesus, whom, having not seen, we love, in whom, though now we see Him not, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. If our joy is so great even now at the very thought of Jesus, what will it be when we see Him face to face, and rest at His bosom? If the disciples rejoiced to see the Lord when they saw Him here on this evil and sad world, will we not rejoice much more when we see Him in glory

and enthroned in the midst of His archangels as the King of kings? Verily, the hearts of the redeemed will rejoice when "He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." That will be joy unspeakable!

And joined to this happiness will be the sweet joy of seeing our loved ones again. Yes, we will see them again, not in pain, as we have often seen them here, not in suffering inflicted by wicked and hateful men, not weeping in sorrow, not stained by sin and deformed by weakness, nor marked by blemishes of body, soul, or mind, but we will see them glorified in body, enlightened with heavenly knowledge, and pure in soul, rejoicing in fullness of joy and in pleasures forevermore. There husband and wife, parents and children, brother and sister will celebrate the wedding of the bride and the Lamb, and will join in the singing of praise to Him that hath loved them, led them, protected them, and brought them to meet in the joy that is above every joy. O blessed reunion:

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet.

And one will help the other to raise hallelujah upon hallelujah to the God of their salvation. Oh, what must it be to be there!

There at our Savior's side!
Heav'n is our home;
We shall be glorified.
Heav'n is our home;
There are the saved and blest,
Those we love most and best;
And there we, too, shall rest.
Heav'n is our home.

III.

But how now? Shall not a sad parting again interrupt that joy of meeting? Nevermore! Listen to the Savior's promise: "And your joy no man taketh from you."

In heaven our joy will differ in two ways from the joy of this earth. The joy of this earth is never complete; even in our happiest moments there is always something wanting to fill the cup. But in heaven "there is fullness of joy." There nothing will be lacking, nothing more is to be added to that cup which overflows with joys. — And again, the pleasures of this earth are short, oh, so short! They last only a few moments. But the pleasures at God's right hand are *forevermore*. If we but obtain the happiness of heaven, then Christ will fulfill His promise: "Your joy no man

taketh from you." There no bitter partings nor cruel death will separate them whom God has joined before the throne of the Lamb.

How sweet is this consolation here as we part from our loved ones! We shall meet in glory to part no more. "So shall we ever be with the Lord," says Paul. The Lord will be in our midst, and we will be united before and around Him. And all this will then not be a matter of faith but of sight and of reality. Then no fear that the joys may be interrupted will trouble us, for our joy *shall no man take from us*.

Wherefore, my beloved, let these words of our Savior, which He spoke at parting, comfort you now as you part for a time from your husband and father: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." You remember that during his illness your father often said, "I will see you again." Follow, then, in that narrow way which leadeth unto life. Let God's Word be your guide, the food of your soul, and the water of life to your spirit. Hear and read it as often as you have opportunity. Cling to Christ by faith, and He, the Good Shepherd, will unite you again with him from whom you have now parted. Then you will rejoice with him, and praise that faithful God who has led you by way of the cross to the crown of righteousness. Amen.

M. S. S.

Outlines for Sermons on the Gospel-Lessons.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

JOHN 16, 5—15.

The words of our text are taken from Christ's farewell address to His disciples in the night in which He was betrayed. Before He went to the Mount of Olives, into the garden Gethsemane, we find Him in an upper chamber in the city of Jerusalem, surrounded by His twelve disciples, eating the Passover with them, and instituting the Holy Supper. He knew that the hour was drawing near for Him to go into suffering and death, — how shocked His disciples would be to see Him in the hands of His enemies, — what a severe test this was to be to their faith in Him. He therefore impressed it on their minds that they must reconcile themselves to the thought that He would leave them, that for a little while at first, and then permanently, He would withdraw from them His visible presence. It was a touching address in which He bade them farewell. And what was the effect of His words upon the disciples? Sorrow. Our Gospel says: vv. 5. 6. But Christ so loved His disciples that He could not

bear to see them sorrowing. He is the Savior who wipes sorrow's tears away. Forthwith He comforted them and said: v. 7. He tells them that He is not only going into suffering and death, but that He is going to return to heaven whence He came, that He is to be exalted to the right hand of God the Father Almighty, that it was expedient for them and to their benefit that He should do so. He would not forsake them. He would be mindful of them and do great things for them even from His divine throne. He would send them the Holy Ghost, whom He calls the Comforter and the Spirit of truth, and of whom He tells what great things He is to accomplish upon this earth.

THE HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER AND THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

I. *The Comforter.*

II. *The Spirit of truth.*

I.

a. The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, is the third person in the Holy Trinity. Jesus says, "If I depart, I will send Him unto you." The Holy Ghost is not merely a power emanating from God. How could Jesus send Him to us to work upon this earth in the hearts of men, if He were not a person distinct from the Father and the Son? And He proceeds from both, not from the Father only, as the Greek Church claims. If Jesus sends Him, must He not proceed from the Son?

b. The meaning of the word "Comforter" in this connection. The word used here is Paraclete, and the same word is used 1 John 2, 1, where it is translated "Advocate." A paraclete is one called to the side of another for the purpose of helping him in any way. But the Holy Ghost helps and aids us in a different way than Christ does. Christ intercedes for us before the throne of God, and therefore He is our Advocate with the Father. But the Holy Ghost, as our Paraclete, pleads the cause of the believer against the world. He is our Comforter against the world.

c. How the Holy Ghost pleads the believer's cause against the world, v. 8. To understand this Gospel rightly we must present to our minds a trial in which both we and the world have been arraigned before the judge, and in which the world stands up against us and we stand up against the world. The counselor and defender on our side is the Holy Ghost, and on the world's side the devil, who is the prince of this world. How does the Holy Ghost take our part and defend us against the world? He reproves the world, v. 8: a. of sin, v. 9. The unbelieving children of this world make light of sin, but the Holy Ghost declares unto them that they have merited

eternal damnation with sin. The reason why He reproves them of sin is because they do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They refuse to accept the forgiveness. Hence their sins stick to them, and they will have to answer for every one of their sins in the day of judgment. Unbelief is the greatest sin in the world. *β.* The Holy Ghost reproves the world of righteousness, v. 10. He declares unto the unbelieving children of this world that they should be righteous, that God wants them to be holy and without blemish. And why does the Holy Ghost reprove them for being without righteousness? Because perfect righteousness has been procured for all the children of men through the great redemptive work of the only-begotten Son of God, through His going to the Father. They ignore and reject this righteousness which they should possess, and if they do believe in a hereafter, they expect to reach heaven by their own filthy righteousness, Is. 64, 6. *γ.* Finally, the Holy Ghost reproves the world of judgment, v. 11. He declares unto the children of the world that the day of judgment will come. And what must they expect in the judgment? Can they expect to be acquitted? No; they shall stand convicted and condemned. And why does the Holy Ghost reprove the world of judgment? Because the prince of the world, the devil, is already judged. His works have been destroyed by the Son of God. His power is broken. Only they shall share his doom who willingly serve him and refuse the salvation which Christ has procured for all. Thus does the Holy Ghost plead against the world for us as our Comforter.

II.

a. He guides men into all truth, vv. 12. 13. *α.* This He did with the apostles when He came upon them on the day of Pentecost. What a wonderful change was wrought in them from that day! They had a perfect understanding now of Christ's person and office, and in setting forth Christian doctrine they could no more make a mistake. They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, who guided them in all truth. Not of Himself did the Holy Ghost speak to the apostles, that is, He did not limit His revelations to things concerning His own person, but revealed to them the whole counsel of God as to the salvation of the sinful world. At the same time He disclosed to them the future, so that they could tell all about future events, the end of the world, day of judgment, heaven and hell. *β.* To this day the Holy Ghost will guide you into all truth, if you will be led by Him. But He does not bring new revelations. He connects Himself with the written Word. If you will hear and read the Word, you will grow in the knowledge of the truth and not fall into error.

b. He glorifies Christ, who is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Herein does the Holy Ghost establish Himself as the Spirit of truth. *α.* He did this in the disciples, vv. 14. 15. If anything shows and proves that the Holy Ghost had come from Jesus, that Jesus had sent Him, it is that which He taught the apostles, that which He put in their minds and mouths to teach and preach. What was it that filled their hearts so that they could not constrain themselves, but had to tell everybody? Was it morality, the desire

to make better men and to teach them to do right? No; it was Christ, His love, His work for fallen man. The Spirit of truth glorified Christ through the apostles, praised Christ through them, exalted Christ as the only Savior and Redeemer. β . To this day the greatest and the most important work which the Spirit of truth performs in your heart is to glorify Christ. What is the greatest truth in the world, the truth which outshines all the other truths, as the sun surpasses all the other lights in the sky as to brilliancy and splendor? It is the great truth: John 3, 16. 1 Tim. 1, 15. This is the great truth which the Holy Ghost brings into men's hearts to make them happy both here in time and hereafter in eternity. Where this truth is set aside and denied, there the Christian Church ceases to exist, because the Spirit of truth is resisted in His work and driven away. Let us cling to the old Gospel. Let us not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ and the Spirit of truth shall abide with us, John 8, 31. 32. H. S.

Outline of a Confessional Sermon on 1 Cor. 11, 23—32.

The Papists claim that they value the Lord's Supper highly,—they also celebrate it with remarkable pomp and display; but by their false and unscriptural doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper they prove the contrary.

THAT TRUE LUTHERANS VALUE THE LORD'S SUPPER HIGHLY.

I. *Why true Lutherans value the Lord's Supper highly.*

A. On account of its *Author*.

a. Who has ordained and instituted the Lord's Supper? 1. Not a mere man; not an angel; 2. but our Lord Jesus Christ ("received of the Lord," v. 23. Ps. 111, 4); the God-man, who is true, all-wise, and almighty.

b. When? "In the same night," etc.

B. On account of its *heavenly gift*.

a. Which is the heavenly gift in the Lord's Supper? 1. In, with, and under the bread, prepared of flour, He gives us His true and natural body, which was given into death for us. 2. In, with, and under the wine, of the fruit of the vine, He gives us His true and natural blood which was shed upon the cross for the remission of our sins.

b. Who receives this heavenly gift? All communicants, all who partake of the Lord's Supper, whether worthy or unworthy. This heavenly gift is a *constituent part* of the Holy Sacrament. "This is my body," etc., vv. 28. 29.

C. On account of its *benefit*.

a. What is the benefit of the Lord's Supper? Forgiveness of sins. Ps. 32, 1. 2. 103, 1—4. Life and salvation. (*Little Treasure of Prayers*, p. 64. Luther's *House Postil*, vol. II, pp. 6. 7.)

b. Who receives this benefit? 1. Not the unworthy communicants. *α*. What communicants are unworthy? Those who do not believe or doubt the words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." (Luther, *ibid.*, p. 18.) *β*. What do the unworthy receive? "They eat and drink damnation to themselves." God punishes them with sickness and other afflictions, v. 30.—2. Only the worthy communicants receive the benefit. *α*. Who are they? Only the believers, who believe Christ's words of institution and promise. *β*. How do they become worthy? Only and solely by believing these words: "This is my body; this is my blood, given and shed for you for the remission of sins." (Luther, *ibid.*, p. 7.)

Therefore we Christians, we Lutherans, cherish the Lord's Supper as a treasure of the highest value.

II. *How true Lutherans prove that they value the Lord's Supper highly.*

A. By taking the words of the testament and institution, "This is my body, this is my blood," *in the proper sense, and not figuratively*. We take these words as they stand and read, according to the letter.

a. Because they are clear and plain, Mark 14, 24;

b. because they are words of a divine testament, Gal. 3, 15. Rev. 22, 18. 19.

B. By rejecting all and every false and unscriptural doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper.

a. The unscriptural doctrines of the Papists: Transubstantiation (Synod. Cat., Qu. 328. Dietr. Cat., Qu. 581 ff.); consubstantiation (Dietr. Cat., Qu. 583); one kind (Synod. Cat., Qu. 329. Dietr. Cat., Qu. 601); adoration.—Unbloody sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, Hebr. 10, 14. 18.

b. The unscriptural doctrines of the sectarians: This bread represents my body; this wine represents my blood. Signifies. The body of Christ cannot be at one time in more places than one.

C. By partaking of the Lord's Supper frequently. Those who do not receive it often show their disregard. "Often," v. 26. Matt. 11, 28. (Luther, *ibid.*, p. 14.)

D. By examining ourselves before we partake of the Lord's Supper.

a. What does it mean to examine one's self? It means to consider well in what condition we are. (Luther, *ibid.*, p. 20 ff.)

b. How should one examine himself? (Synod. Cat., Qu. 348. Luther, *ibid.*, p. 20.)

E. By thanking the Lord for this precious food for our soul, Ps. 103, 1—3. 106, 1. 2.

Thus true Lutherans prove that they value the Lord's Supper highly.

Praise the Father dear in heaven,
Who such heavenly food hath given,
And for sins which thou hast done
Hath caused to die His own dear Son.

J. C. A.